

Highlanders Will Probably Open Season Here---Big League Leaders Confident

EXPECT YANKEES TO OPEN SEASON

Harry Wolverton's New York Highlanders Will Probably Start 1912 Campaign at Florida Avenue. Nothing in Ainsmith Deal.

By "SENATOR."

Washington fans may expect to get the first look at the Nationals of 1912 in a championship game with the New York Highlanders.

This week there will be a meeting of the joint committee on schedules from both the major leagues. While there may be some trouble in the National League, the list of games in the American League is more or less of a cut and dried variety. Last spring the Washington club got under way at Boston, so in the ordinary course of events it should be New York here for the opener.

With the Highlanders in Washington, it will probably be the Boston Red Sox against the Athletics at Philadelphia, while the clubs on the Western circuit will be playing among themselves. After the clubs in each division have faced each other in four games, the trips will start, this year being the turn of Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland and St. Louis to come this way for a stretch after which the Easterners will follow.

Deal to Vanish.

That nothing will come of that proposed deal of Eddie Ainsmith for Jack Knight, of New York, appears assured. Griffith said last week that as much as he would like to have Knight around he does not feel that he should weaken the catching staff which is now one of the best balanced in the American League.

Despite the fact that Knight was not a glowing success with the Philadelphia Athletics, Griffith has always liked the player, and many yet put in a cash bid for his services, but that Ainsmith will be allowed to slip away is most improbable unless Griffith suddenly changes his mind.

Griff on Religion.

At this season of the year it is rather interesting to hear Griffith's opinion on the question of baseball and religion.

"While I have never considered myself No. 1 on the revised list of Christians, still I believe it is a good thing for ball players to be active church members," meditates the manager.

"Some of the language used around the park at times, especially in defeat, would not look proper on a Sunday school banner, still I feel that some of the best players I have ever directed

GREATEST TWENTY NAPS INCLUDE OLD STONEWALL INFELD

Some Wonderful Performers Have Worn Cleveland Uniforms.

By ED BANG.

CLEVELAND, Dec. 25.—The greatest twenty Naps? That's a stickler and no mistake. But then a list of the greatest twenty will be read with interest by the fans even though they may disagree with the writer.

The greatest twenty will be divided into five outfielders, six infielders, seven pitchers, and two catchers. Only two baskettops are used for the very good reason that Cleveland has never been long in good catchers since this city has been represented in the American League.

Heading the outfielders will be Joe Jackson. Then will follow Elmer Flick and Joe Birmingham, as the other two regular fly chasers. Billy Lush and Harry Bay will be the fourth and fifth members of the outer garden brigade.

The "old stonewall" flashes through one's brain when the infield is given consideration. George Stovall at first base, Napoleon Lajoie at second, Terry Turner at short, and Bill Bradley at third. That was a truly wonderful quartet when all of the four were playing at their best, an infield that compared with the present brilliant inner works owned by Connie Mack. Neal Ball and George Perring would be the sub infielders, the former on strength of his great work last season, and Perring because he has played every position on the Naps' infield.

Includes Joss.

The twirling septet would include the late Addie Joss, Earl Moore, Vean Gregg, Bill Bernhard, Robert Rhoades, Frank Donahue, and Gene Krapp. While a pitching staff this would make for the present Naps, it is a pity that only had these seven twirlers working for him in 1912, all of them at the clip they showed in their palmist days. Joss, Moore, Bernhard, Rhoades, and Gregg could just about pitch any team to a championship, that is, with all five showing their one-time great form. The other two would only be needed to finish games. Krapp is given the call over Otto Hom as being the nearest as compared to Hoss' indifference.

Bemis and Clarke.

Of all the catchers the Naps have had Harry Bemis and Jay Clarke stand out as the best. Both of them worked in pastures new last year, having outlived their usefulness as Naps.

If one went back to the days of the old "Buddies," Chief Zimmer and Jack O'Connor would have the call over Bemis and Clarke as catchers. Pat Toban would be the first baseman and manager; Ed McKean would beat Turner out of the Naps' first base position. Burkett and Jim McAleer would make up for what Lush and Bay, while Cy Young and Nip Cunny would be on the bench.

Matty's Record Better Than Mordecai Brown's

Though many National League rooters believe Mordecai Brown the equal of Big Six Mathewson, the sterling veteran twirler of the New York Giants, a glance at their respective records, beginning with 1905, the year the three-angled gentleman made his appearance, shows immediately that Matty has not only worked in more games, but has a higher percentage of victories. Here are their records:

W. L. Pct.	W. L. Pct.
1905..... 31 9 .775	1905..... 18 12 .600
1906..... 24 12 .667	1906..... 20 6 .769
1907..... 24 12 .667	1907..... 20 6 .769
1908..... 31 11 .738	1908..... 29 9 .763
1909..... 25 6 .806	1909..... 27 9 .750
1910..... 29 9 .763	1910..... 26 14 .652
1911..... 26 18 .591	1911..... 21 11 .656
Totals..... 192 72 .727	Totals..... 162 67 .713

Can't Find \$2,500 Posted by Nelson

NEW YORK, Dec. 25.—Gil Boag, manager for One-Round Hogan, declared today he had worn out a pair of shoes looking for the \$2,500 Battling Nelson declared he had posted as a side bet for a distance fight with Hogan.

"I will cover the money the instant I can find it," said Boag. "In a long fight, Hogan could beat Nelson to death."

Marty O'Toole Is in Best Shape of Career

BROCKTON, Mass., Dec. 25.—Marty O'Toole, the crack pitcher, for whom Pittsburgh paid \$25,000, has just completed a course of treatment here and declares he is in the best shape of his career. Two years ago O'Toole had rheumatism in his shoulder, which seriously interfered with his work.

Father of League

Charley Comiskey is the father of the Western League, or, rather, the protector. Every August Commy purchases a dozen or so promising looking players in that circuit and just as soon as the next spring rolls around he proceeds to turn them back. Just now he has a big bunch of men from that league on his reserve list.

Among them are Outfielder Matticks, of Des Moines; Kelly, Jones, and Powell, of the St. Joseph club, and Shortstop Berger and Catchers Clements, of the Pueblo team. Frank Isbell is the Pueblo manager.

BOB THAYER'S Sporting Gossip

"Every Knock Is a Boost."

Hope you like the turkey.

Jack Johnson's arrival here has started rumors of a battle between him and "Fireman Jim" Flynn, conqueror of Al Kaufman and Carl Morris. There is a little comparison between the two athletes. It is a contrast. A good big man is always better than a good little one and Jim Flynn has never proven himself to be even a good little man. He would be very easy for the world's champion.

Griff is loafing today.

Martin Becker, Buck's young brother, will probably get a trial with the Bridgeport club, of the Connecticut League, next season, and Washingtonians will watch his career closely, feeling certain that the boy has promise as a fielding first baseman.

The Capital City has contributed many good players to the baseball world. Will Becker prove another? Maryland's hunting ends.

Mike Murphy recovering.

That big athletic meet, opening in New York tomorrow evening, should result in a couple of broken records, for many of the best athletes in this country and Canada have entered the various events. The winners will stand good chances of being chosen for the American Olympic team, and this means that the races will be fought out to the final stride.

Yankies open here?

Charlie Comiskey, "father of the Western League," regularly every year does what Jimmy McAleer is accused of doing, "covering up" youngsters. Terrible crime! Yes, 'tis a terrible crime, my lads, but they all do it, and the lords of baseball know it. The books carry punishment for the crime, but very seldom are the punishments meted out. But it's surely a terrible crime!

Wish it were summer again.

"Cactus" Cravath, once with the Nationals, after failing to hold his own with the Boston Red Sox, will be with Charlie Doolin's Phillies next season, and his many friends here will watch him work in the hopes of seeing him succeed in sticking with the big show. Cravath is an unmerciful slugger of the swinging type, and he may find it difficult hitting big league pitchers from landing on the old-timers of the American Association.

Flynn pie for Johnson.

The businesslike attitude of Manager Clark Griffith toward the work of rebuilding the Nationals is making a hit all around the baseball world. If the "Old Fox" can keep up what he has begun, Washington's baseball team will cease to be a large laugh in the American League. From what many fans have told me, I conclude that he is also making a hit right here at home.

Clean breaks in Gotham.

Fred Mitchell, whose right name is Fred Yapp, once a pitcher with the Boston Americans and Philadelphia Nationals, and more recently a catcher with the New York Highlanders, has been the managerial fever, and is trying for the place at Lynn, Mass. Mitchell surprised the baseball world when he shifted from a pitcher to a catcher and made good in the Eastern League.

Basketball is sleeping.

Clark Griffith isn't worrying over the confidence of the Virginia baseball team in its ability to land defeat to his Nationals next spring. "These spring exhibition games count for nothing," he told me the other day, "and I'd just as soon lose them all, if we could learn anything in them for the real games to come after the bell rings."

We'll miss Yale's quint.

Through the bursting of a steam pipe in the vessel carrying him to Australia, Beals Wright, the American challenger for the Davis Cup, lost his especially prized racquet, and was forced to send a wireless message to San Francisco for more. The new ones, made to measurements left by Wright the day before he sailed, followed him on the next steamer, and he expects to win against the Australians this week.

DIAMOND DOPE

Outfielder Perry, who led the Eastern, now International League, in batting last season, has been sold by the Providence club to Detroit.

The Pacific Coast League will open the season on April 2 and close October 27. The coast circuit has the longest playing season of any league in the country.

John McCloskey, the former big league manager and present owner of the Butte club in the Union Association, will place a team in Ogden, Utah, next season.

Joe Tinker says the Cubs haven't treated him right. After ten years of service Joe thinks the Cubs should have released him to Cincinnati, where he had a chance to manage the team.

W. H. Watkins and Sol Meyer, owners of the Indianapolis team, now control the Newark franchise in the Ohio State League and the Springfield franchise in the Central League.

Christy Mathewson hit just one batman last season, had two wild pitches, and gave thirty-eight bases on balls, fewer than one to a game. This record doesn't look very much as if the old boy were going back.

BASEBALL FINDS BEST RUNNERS IN COBB AND DEVORE

Milan, of Nationals, Had Fifty-eight Stolen Bases.

Ty Cobb, of the Detroit Tigers, stole eighty-three bases during the 1911 season. Bob Becher, of the Cincinnati Reds, stole eighty. In these two baseball finds her greatest base-runners, at least, as far as figures go. Josh Devore, of the New York Giants, had sixty-one stolen bases to his credit; Clyde Milan of the Washington Nationals, had fifty-eight. These two came nearest to equalling the total of the two leaders.

Cobb and Becher differ in size and style, and of the two Cobb is unquestionably the greater. Cobb depends on his speed, agility, and cunning; Becher on weight and speed.

In 1911 Becher played in seven more games than Cobb. A member of the team that was never a serious contender after the first two months of the season, Becher had the opportunity to run wild. Cobb, a member of a team that was in the pennant fight until the last six weeks of the season, had to keep in leash. Cobb's ability to steal was not given full liberty until the championship race was practically decided against Detroit.

Becher could afford to take almost any chance; Cobb could not. Although Becher stole but three bases less than Cobb, the Detroit star scored forty-one more runs than Becher, getting a total of 147 runs to Becher's 116. Cobb stole more bases in less attempts than Becher.

In the American League conditions for base-runners are about even with those in the National. The pitchers of the American are much more alert in watching base-runners than those of the National, while the American League catchers are inferior to those of the parent organization.

With Cobb, base running, like batting, is a science. Cobb has spent hours practicing sliding. Cobb slides when the occasion does not call for it. He has done much sliding that appeared unnecessary to opposing players and spectators, but he continually slid into bags to make the action mechanical, covering himself to time the slide perfectly, to prevent sliding short or over-sliding the bag. Cobb claims that "hitting the dirt" at the proper distance from the bag has become as natural for him as starting for first after hitting the ball.

Cobb's lead is not nearly as large as Becher's. Playing against the same pitcher that Cobb has, Becher would also have to cut down his enormous leads.

Outguessing the catcher is another feature of the Cobb method. He studies catchers as carefully as pitchers. He tries to figure what they expect and then does the opposite.

The infield covering the bag for which Cobb is bound, next comes into play. All the bases the baseman's eyes, his ears are on the ball the catcher is throwing. By watching the eyes Cobb has learned the course of his slide. His ability does the rest.

Armour to Scout for Bresnahan's "Wreckers"

CLEVELAND, Dec. 25.—The news came from St. Louis last night that W. R. Armour, manager of the St. Louis National League club, had secured W. R. Armour to scout for the Cardinals during the coming season. This gives Bresnahan's two late club presidents as scouts, Kinseola, of the Springfield (Ill.) club, having been engaged a few days ago.

Until recently, Armour was president of the Toledo club, but a few weeks ago he sold his interests in that team to C. W. Somers, of Cleveland. Somers offered him the position of Nap scout, but Armour did not definitely accept. His signing with St. Louis indicated that he will no longer be affiliated with the Cleveland magnate, with whom he has been connected ever since the winter of 1901.

Armour enjoys a reputation second to none as a scout for baseball talent. When he was manager and owner of the Dayton club he turned out such players as Wiley Platt, Elmer Flick, Earl Moore, and Gene Wright, the latter showing promise of being a wonderful pitcher, when his arm went back on him. He also dug up Otto Hess, who became a star with the Cleveland Indians, and Charley Smith his first trial, and found Baskette, James, Yingling, and others who have worn Cleveland uniforms.

Red Sox Will Face White Sox Flag Day

CHICAGO, Dec. 25.—The Boston Red Sox have been given the honor of playing the White Sox on "flag-raising day" at Comiskey Park. On that day the flag which the South Siders strated from the Cuban flag in the city serves for the White Sox. A celebration befitting the occasion is planned.

The honor was given the Boston club because of the friendship existing between officials of the two teams, Jimmy McAleer, Robert McRoy, and Jake Stahl, of the Red Sox, are close personal friends of President Comiskey and Manager Callahan.

"Coming Back" Easy

"Nothing so unusual about my coming back and making good," remarked Manager Jimmy Callahan, of the Chicago White Sox, last week. "You see, it was this way. When I quit the White Sox several years ago, I turned over a new leaf and cut out tobacco and liquor in every form. And, all the time I was out of organized baseball, I was keeping in shape physically. Then, when I did come back, it was as a live wire and not a dead one. That's all."

BASEBALL OUTLOOK BRIGHT TO LEADERS

Major League Managers and Moguls Confident of Doing Well During Diamond Campaign of 1912. Griff Has Hopes.

Supreme confidence is generally manifested in the opinions of the various managers and presidents of the National and American League teams regarding the outlook for the coming baseball season. Here you have what they all say. You may take your pick:

Mack—The Athletics won in 1910 and 1911. Next year's team will be stronger than those of the past two seasons. Infer what you like.

McGraw—The Giants were the best team in 1911. We proved it after one of the hottest nights on record, and we will repeat it for good measure in 1912. Infer what you like.

Jennings—Detroit was second in 1911 despite poor pitching. I believe I have picked up the "necessary" pitching strength to land the team first.

Chance—The Giants were mighty lucky. Our pitching will be better in 1912 and we will beat out the Giants. With good pitching we would have won easily.

Davis—The Naps finished third with a bunch of youngsters. Next year they will be better. I believe the improvement makes Cleveland a big factor in the race for the pennant. With anything like an even break next season, we will win another pennant beyond doubt.

Callahan—Chicago just hit its salt when the season closed. The city series showed our possibilities. At this salt next year there's nothing to it.

President Johnson Says Sketch to Be Written Around His Own Life.

ST. LOUIS Mo., Dec. 25.—There will be breach between the Cardinals and Browns as a result of the American League's refusing to meet the National in interleague games except upon certain conditions. Whatever the result on the world's series, the world's series of St. Louis will go on just as it has in the past.

Fan Johnson, president of the American League, when asked for an opinion as to the St. Louis situation, wired as follows:

"The Browns and Cardinals are signed up to play annually a spring and fall series for a period of five years. They handle their own tickets, each club at its own park, and work independently of the National Commission. This makes the St. Louis situation, wired as follows: As there is no commission to step in and demand a certain per cent of the gross receipts."

Connie Mack Is at Times Most Sarcastic

Connie Mack at times is the most sarcastic manager in baseball. On the face of it he has an easy-going disposition, yet he is one of the sternest disciplinarians in the game, although he is never apparently stern.

During the early days of the American League Mack had as first baseman the veteran Charlie Carr, who was recently appointed manager of the Kansas City team of the American Association.

This was in 1911, and Mack was having a struggle to keep above water here. He had a rawboned youth named Plank on the mound one day. The Athletics played wretchedly, Plank's pitching being as bad as the Mackmen's fielding.

Carr was a particularly bad performer. After the giant first baseman dropped his third thrown ball, Mack came wild, but in a quiet way. He waited for Carr as he was walking to the bench. Taking a dime from his pocket, he handed it to Carr.

"What's that for?" said Carr in surprise.

"It's car fare home," replied Mack. "and take Plank with you."

Mack meant what he said and didn't permit either Carr or Plank to play any more that day.

Dwyer Will Probably Pilot Des Moines Club

CHICAGO, Dec. 25.—William Dwyer will probably be named to pilot the Des Moines club in the Western League next season. According to word from President "Tip" O'Neill yesterday the final choice has not been named, but chances favor Dwyer, who now holds down the first base position at the Hawkeye town. Dwyer is not new at the job, having acted as field general for some time.

Jimmy Barreel, former Milwaukee manager, and Bart McCormick, also one-time brewer leader, but now the property of the St. Paul club, of the American Association, are also after the position, and both have talked over the situation with O'Neill, who now owns the franchise which Comiskey at of placing Duffy in charge and using as a farm for recruits. Both Barreel and McCormick would be acceptable, but according to O'Neill, who is at Des Moines favors Dwyer, who has gained a large following there.

No Yannigan Travels For Tigers Next Year

According to President Frank Navin, of the Detroit club, there will be no Yannigan trip for the Tiger recruits this spring, as the tour into the wilds by the recruits headed by a couple of veterans has always been a loss to the club and results in very little good to the players. The St. Springs trip for the veterans will also be cut out this year.

O'Day—There is a lot in the Reds that will come out with the right kind of handling. I believe the team has a first-rate chance to land first.

Wolverton—New York is a strong team, and if the pitchers show their real form, the Highlanders will be the most troublesome team in the league.

Bremahan—The Cardinals proved to be the National League surprise last year and they will be a sensation in 1912. The wings must beat us, believe me.

Griffith—I will give supporters of Washington a surprise. They'll forget the cry: "First in war, first in peace, and last in the American League."

Dahlen—Brooklyn has just about reached the point in its development where it will be disappointed. Its real ability. Supporters will be content.

McAleer—Boston is too good a baseball town not to have the very best. The fans here want to be shown, and we intend to deliver the real goods.

Doolin—The Phillies will be the National League's representatives in the world's series next year. We will play the championship of St. Louis.

Wallace—The St. Louis Browns will not win the baseball championship in 1912. Fans who expect them to occupy that place will be disappointed.

Ward—As president of the Boston team, I believe we have a better club than most people believe. I am not claiming a pennant, but watch for a surprise.

BREACH BETWEEN ST. LOUIS TEAMS IS IMPROBABLE

President Johnson Says Sketch to Be Written Around His Own Life.

DETROIT, Mich., Dec. 25.—Herrman Schaefer, the irrepressible, is planning on a more extensive vaudeville tour next winter. Schaefer is dissatisfied with his present sketch, and he plans to have one written around himself following the 1912 season.

"Extemporaneous fun-making isn't to my liking," said Herrman. "I plan four or more weeks in vaudeville, and in that time I expect to arrive at a point where I can work out a 1912-13 skit for myself."

Schaefer will not acknowledge it, but he believes he has a future in vaudeville.

Says George Mullin Will Lead Pitchers

DETROIT, Dec. 25.—George Mullin will be the leading pitcher in the American League in 1912.

This from Ty Cobb, leading batsman, fielder extraordinary and base runner par excellence.

"Because of a physical disability Mullin was unable to do himself justice in 1911. It was not until near the close of the season that he regained form and followers of baseball will remember his prowess then."

"In the preparatory games for the world's series Mullin had the Athletics on the hip. Had Mullin pitched for New York in the championship games a world's champions' pennant would have floated over the Polo Grounds in 1912."

"There isn't a player who has been with Mullin any length of time but acknowledges George is among the best of them. Mullin has everything at his command. His experience in the big leagues has added to his craftiness."

"During the all-star games with the Athletics Mullin and I were thrown together, and it was then that George told me he was in physical condition. That being the case, you can watch for a repetition of his 1908 work."

Highlanders May Do Training at Atlanta

NEW YORK, Dec. 25.—It was reported here today that the Atlanta club of the Southern League will in future be the "farm" of the New York Americans. Charley Hemphill, former Yankee player, is manager of the team, and the Yankees already have sent Reville, a promising pitcher, and Russell, an infielder, and Bailey, an outfielder, to Atlanta for further seasoning.

Tommy Connolly Now Dean of Indicator Men

With the pensioning of Jack Sheridan and the signing by Cincinnati of Hank O'Day as manager, Tommy Connolly, of Natick, Mass., becomes the dean of the umpires in America. Tommy has been umpiring ever since 1883, but did not break into the big leagues until 1894, one year after O'Day.

Portland to Have Club in Two League

Portland, Ore., will boast the only two clubs of different leagues outside those in the larger Eastern cities. They're to have both the Pacific Coast and Northwestern.

Tomorrow's Sports

Amateur Athletic Union Meet in New York city.

George Chip vs. Jimmy Howard, six rounds, at Pittsburgh, Pa.

Sam Langford vs. McVey, twenty rounds, at Sydney, Australia.

Joe Jeannette vs. Jack Twin Sullivan, ten rounds, at Buffalo, N. Y.

Terry Nelson vs. Frankie Madden, fifteen rounds, at Savannah, Ga.

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